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Summer/Fall 2000

Labor & Industry NEWS

Volume V, Issue 2

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Insurance Data Accepted Electronically

• **Lori Stetson-Williams**

Imagine a room measuring 30' x 50' filled to the ceiling with shelves loaded with paper folders. That is what we had at the Employment Relations Division (ERD) in 1994, and our room contained only about half of all of Montana's workers' compensation claims. In 1995 we built a database to store all this data, but with electronic storage came the problems of data-entry time-frames, quality control, and completeness of data.

Electronic data interchange (EDI) provided the solution. EDI is the computer-to-computer exchange of data over telephone lines. It has been used for many years by financial institutions to convey financial data. EDI provides a fast, accurate, reliable and cost-effective method of distributing data.

In 1990, the International Association of Industrial Accident Boards and Commissions (IAIABC) joined forces with the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) to establish data interchange standards for Workers' Compensation data. Work groups formed by representatives from insurance companies, workers' compensation jurisdictions, vendors, and claim administrators worked to find consensus

continued on page 2



EDI Team pictured left to right : Marla Yager, Sharon Peterson, Lori Williams, and Gary Holt.

New Publication Receives Positive Response

• **Jean Branscum**

The first issue of the recently launched department magazine, **Main Street Montana**, received a warm welcome from the private and public sector. Employers subscribing stated they found the publication "very interesting and informative".

The publication was created to keep employers better informed and more aware of employment laws and regulations. Future issues of **Main Street Montana** will provide answers to common employment questions, present information on emerging issues at the state and national levels, and summarize employment services and resources available through the State of Montana. Working in partnership with the Department of Commerce, a section of the magazine will focus on one region within the state.

If you have ideas for an article, please contact your division representative for the publication: Raini Williams, Job Service; Colleen Scow, Unemployment Insurance; John Weida, Employment Relations; and Jean Branscum, Centralized Services/Commissioner's Office.

If you haven't had the opportunity to see a copy of the publication, you can view it online at <http://dli.state.mt.us/mainstree.html>.

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Commissioner's Corner



• Pat Haffey

I am pleased to introduce Brent Rabe, who began serving as Department of Labor and Industry's Personnel Officer on August 2, 2000. Brent came to us from the Department of Environmental Quality, where he also served as Personnel Officer. Our agency was fortunate to receive applications from a number of very well qualified personnel professionals. Our selection team used the behavior

based interview process to focus on the competencies that are most important in the position. Brent demonstrated considerable strength in customer service, team work, integrity, decision making and problem solving, relationship management and continuous learning.

The personnel function is extremely important in any agency to ensure fair and consistent personnel policies are used. Although you may not always be directly aware of the activities in the personnel office, you can be sure that they have been involved in several aspects of your employment including advertising for the job you are in, participating in selecting you for the position, classifying your position for the appropriate grade and pay, ensuring your performance appraisal is completed, and assisting you and your supervi-

sor in resolving misunderstandings or disputes.

As Brent steps into his role as personnel officer he will be concentrating on some special projects in addition to his regular duties. The special projects include carrying the competency project to the next step which means incorporating competencies into position descriptions, performance appraisals, and vacancy announcements. Another special project is to develop an "employee exchange plan", which would provide opportunities for employees to voluntarily exchange positions with employees in similar grade levels in other divisions. The goal would be to provide cross-division information sharing, department wide perspective, and opportunities for employees to compete for positions with a broad experience base and understanding of the agency. I have also asked Brent to continue working on an Employee Orientation/Reorientation Program

The personnel function is extremely important in any agency to ensure fair and consistent personnel policies are used.

so that new and old employees have a better understanding of our agency and how all of the parts fit together. Brett will continue our efforts to provide supervisory training on key topics at our Management Team/Supervisory Training sessions. He will also facilitate our Labor Management Committee meetings.

For those of you who had the pleasure of working with our former Personnel Officer, Ken McElroy, I am sure it was difficult to learn that he was leaving our agency. Ken advised us on difficult issues such as discipline handling, grievance resolution, and recruiting for positions that were hard to fill. He took the lead in implementing our competency based human resource management system. He revised several

policies so that they were easier to understand and administer. He traveled throughout the state to ensure personnel issues were addressed in a fair and competent manner. Ken was skillful in assembling and analyzing data, particularly as it pertained to his personnel responsibilities. To give you an example of the excellent and productive efforts put forth by Ken and his personnel staff, a total of 484 classification reviews were performed since 1996. During that same period, 677 recruitment and selection actions were processed.

Thanks to Ken, Barb, Adeline, Kim and Wendy for providing professional personnel work for DLI! Good luck to Brent as he joins this excellent personnel team.

Insurance Data

Continued from page 1

the type of data sent. They wrote manuals and dictionaries to document a national standard for workers' compensation EDI.

In June of 1996, ERD and CIGNA Corporation signed an EDI trading partner agreement. After thorough testing, First Reports of Injury were transmitted and received electronically on February 4, 1997. Within months, the majority of first reports from all of Montana's workers' compensation insurers were being transmitted electronically. As of July first of this year, EDI reporting is mandatory for all insurers who sent in more than 50 first reports of injury to ERD last year.

The area formerly containing all of those paper files remains home to the Workers' Compensation claim information. Perhaps even more importantly, information that used to take 30 days to be entered into our database is now entered and available in just 24 hours.

Rabe Named DLI Personnel Officer

• Brent Rabe

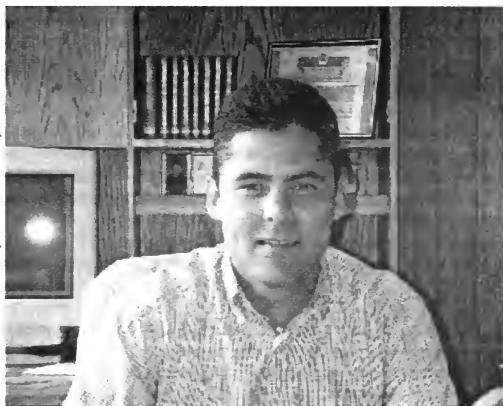
As your new Personnel Officer, I plan to assess the human resource support needs of the department by talking with and listening to many of Personnel's customers. Then, I hope to continue many of the approaches that have already been made and are well received and also try to blend in some of my own ideas that will help to support the mission of the agency.

To tell you a little bit about my background, I have worked for the State of Montana for the past five years. During this time I worked for two and one half years with Department of Justice which included under the tutelage of former DLI Personnel Officer, Pam Wintrose. Following my tenure there, I went to the Department of Environmental Quality for approximately two and a half years. Overall, as a State of Montana employee, some of the areas I have focused my efforts on are classifications, behavior based interviewing practices, performance management systems, and Interest Based Bargaining sessions.

Prior to working for the state of Montana I worked for six years with the Boeing Company. With this company I specialized as an EEO Investigator and was mentored by the corporate headquarters' Industrial/Organization Psychologists in the area of job analysis. Additionally, I worked in an R & D group where I conducted research on employee motivation. I also worked as a Personnel Specialist in one of the company's manufacturing facilities.

My degree is in Business Administration – Management from the University of Montana, with heavy course work focused on Human Resource Management.

Thank you for the warm welcome I've already received, I look forward to working with the DLI team and hope you feel the same.



High Fives

Congratulations to Mary Schilla, Dan Toney and Jean Branscum for their selection as the recipients of the "2000 Governor's Award for Excellence in Performance."

"She (Katherine Dalton Jones) provided excellent professional guidance. . . Her regularity in providing words of encouragement, her "customer friendly" attitude, her giving of dignity and respect, and her boundless energy are what made my experience with Montana Job Service Center a very blessed one."

- Daniel Gonzales

"I'm writing regarding my wage claim. I just wanted to let you (Pam McDaniel, Bonnie Thorvilson, Amy Smith) know how I appreciate your speed and efficiency in dealing with this. I thought it would take much longer even to get things started. . . I received the dismissal and check just 2 weeks after my initial call to Bonnie. Thanks alot for being there."

- Deanna Law

"Just a short note to say a great big thank you. . . Each of you (Mary Fried and Wanda Turner) went out of your of your way, spending well over an hour to help this person, patiently walking the person through the claims taking process. . . Each of you did an outstanding job and the individual commented on leaving the building how well he was treated."

-Ray Mulvaney



Information Technology Highlights

Customize! Customize!

• Nan Nail

Just like you buy a car with a list of special options you prefer, you can customize Microsoft Word to fit your desired work style. If you're like me, you have tasks that you perform frequently and it's a bit of a pain to search through the drop-down menus for the function you want. The answer...Customize Your Toolbar! You can add available commands to any toolbar. Just follow this procedure:

1. In the Menu Bar, click on "Tools." Click on "Customize" in the drop down-menu.
2. In the *Customize* dialog box, click on the "Toolbars" tab.
3. In the list of available toolbars, click to place a check beside the toolbar you want to change. The toolbar you selected will appear on the screen.
4. Click on the *Commands* tab. On the left, you will find a list of "Categories." On the right, you will find a list of "Commands" listed for each category.
5. As you click on each command, it will highlight. (If you're not sure what a highlighted command does, click on the "Description" button. A description of the command will appear.) To add the command, highlight it, hold down the left mouse button and drag the command to the desired location on the toolbar.
6. You can drag a command ("Tool") off the toolbar by clicking and holding the left mouse button and dragging the tool off the toolbar. You can also rearrange tools using this same method.
7. When you are finished making changes, click on "Close" in the Custom Dialog Box.

If you have a hard time figuring out which "Category" contains the icon or menu command you want to add to your toolbars:

1. Choose "Tools," then "Customize."
2. Click the "Commands" tab.
3. Under "Categories," select "All Commands."

This category lists EVERY command in EVERY category. If it's available to add to your Word toolbars, it's in this list.

Ever Feel Like A Dinosaur In The 'Space Age'...?

• Nan Nail

As I was putting together articles on advances in technology in DLI during the last few years I couldn't help but think back to how things were when I first entered the workforce. (I know I'm dating myself here but it seems like I'm older than dirt anyway). These days, kids are computer literate at an age when I was trying to master my Tommy Tipper cup! A friend of mine had to have her 10-year-old daughter show her how to "surf the net." To me, surfing conjures memories of Frankie Avalon and Annette Funicello. Oh well.

Grade school kids carry trig calculators to school now. I carried a slide rule, but not until I got to high school. (By the way, anyone remember how to USE a slide rule? I don't. I bought a trig calculator.) By the way, do you know the difference between a number and an integer?

Not that long ago, a single computer filled an entire room, had lots of importantly flashing lights and had "UNIVAC" proudly displayed on every flat surface.

Data was fed into it using machines that punched little holes in cards (which made great Christmas wreaths by the way...ever tried to be creative with a 3 1/2" floppy.)

I took typing classes. Nowadays kids take "keyboarding" and "computer basics." You were a definite professional if you had an electric typewriter at home. Now, people have home computer systems. As a kid I looked forward to the once-a-week long distance phone call to my grandmother in Toston. Now I go home, get on the net and chat with friends in New Zealand and the British Isles, all at the same time. Now, everything is "virtual." Virtual files, virtual reality...we already have virtual money. You know it's out there but you never see it. The

bank sends you a statement to let you know you've spent "virtually" every dime. We truly live in a marvelous age!

And now, I'm a computer nerd in training. I hear conversations rampant with "techie speak" and understand them (well, part of them anyway). I may be a bit of a dinosaur, but dinosaurs are very "cool" now. Unlike my T-Rex.



Noise & Computer Networks



• Dave Nagel

NOISE! We've all heard it, that unwanted loud radio, neighbor, or group of people talking next to your office. It inhibits your ability to concentrate making it difficult for you to work. But did you know the Department's computer net-

works are also susceptible to noise.

Electric noise affects the ability of the Department's networks to function properly. Electronic noise can slow down and in some cases CRASH the network. The DLI Desktop/Network Team would like to take this opportunity to explain what electrical noise is in reference to a computer network.

Most electrical devices in the United States operate on a 120-volt 60-hertz circuit. This circuit operates your lights, radios, calculators etc... The circuit also has noise, or what we call 60-hertz hum. Depending on how poorly electrical devices (lights, radios, calculators, etc...) are built or are operating, this hum can become more prevalent. For example, most of us have heard the hum from a florescent light and how much louder it gets when the bulbs are not working properly. If you haven't been luckily enough to hear 60-hertz hum, lets use our eyes and look at it. Plug a hair dryer into the same outlet as your TV set, then turn both on. The picture on the TV will probably be somewhat fuzzy. Now turn the hair dryer off, the fuzziness on the TV should go away. Whether you hear or see 60-hertz hum, it's all unwanted noise. Now that you're getting the idea what noise or 60-hertz hum is, we can evaluate how it gets into the Department's computer networks.

Let's pretend you have a fan plugged into your surge protector. When the fan is on, it increases the level of 60-hertz hum on the surge protector. Since your computer is plugged into the same surge protector, the computer now has an increase of 60-hertz hum in its internal electronic devices. Unfortunately what goes in usually comes out; in this case it's right out the network card of your computer and into the Department's computer network. Sadly this is only the beginning of the problem, the computer now tries to determine what logic this 60-hertz hum has and what to do with it. Since 60-hertz hum is noise, it has no logic and after a substantial amount of time, the computer eventually rejects it as bad data. The 60-hertz hum is creating a bad situation on the network and it only gets worse. Not just one, but every computer on the local network is trying to work with the

60-hertz hum.

While one short instance of noise is bad enough, the catastrophic part is the 60-hertz hum is still on the network. All network computers try to read the noise only to reject it again and again and again, (you get the message). The only time this process stops is when the level of noise is lower than the tolerance of the computers on the network.

Unfortunately most people don't know they are creating this network problem. Fortunately we can all take an active roll in stopping the problem. Take a quick look at your surge protector; what do you have plugged into it? **What should and should not be plugged into your surge protector. YES - Plug it in - PC, Monitor and Printer - NO - This may cause network problems - Calculator, radio/stereo, light/lamp (any kind), fan, heater, coffee pot, coffee cup warmer (keeps coffee warm), battery charger, another surge protector, extension cord, digital phone power transformer, refrigerator, water cooler, clock (analog or digital), microwave, toaster, stapler, FAX machine, microfiche machine, dictation machine, etc...** Are you putting noise onto the Department's network? The main thing to remember is if it's not PC related; DON'T plug it in to your surge protector. In addition, your surge protector must be directly plugged into the wall or power pole outlet. Do not plug your surge protector into an extension cord or electrical power strip.



High Fives

"He (Bob Campbell) gave me a new appreciation for our state. . . He came up here today and spoke from his heart. He shared with us his love of freedom and Montana. I'm sure everyone who heard his speech thanks him for being here."

-excerpt from article, *Incredibly Cool Constitution*, written by Mercedes McCann

"I'm very thankful for all you guys (Helena Job Service staff) did helping me put together my resume. I realize you all were just doing your job but, I wanted to let you know you do it very well!"

-Sandy Martian

Congratulations to the Bitterroot Job Service for their selection as the national 1999 runner-up for the Outstanding Employment Service Office of the Year Award by the American Legion.



More Information Technology Highlights

A Model of Things to Come

• John Hawe

The final phase of testing for the new UI Benefit system, (MISTICS) is popularly known as "Model Office." The Unemployment Insurance user acceptance testing and support teams are currently trying out the new system in a simulated production environment. The entire business cycle of processing unemployment insurance claims is being tested, end to end, using live data. Actual claims and inquiries are being processed first in MISTICS and then in the current system (BEAR). We will compare the results along with the timeframes for performing these tasks in both systems. The Model Office phase of testing will provide us with the following:

Production readiness assessment including

- Over all functionality of the MISTICS system
- How well the components (MISTICS, Imaging, Electronic Workflow and Reporting) integrate
- Data conversion assessment

Development of operational procedures for doing business utilizing MISTICS including

- Printing and document scanning processes
- New mail merge process
- Imaging and Workflow processes

Performance and load testing

- Review all MISTICS screens and optimize for acceptable response times
- Online load testing to ensure reasonable response times during periods of high workload

Confidence in our new system prior to production implementation.

Model Office provides us with the perfect opportunity to view how processes will work when the system "goes live" (scheduled for October 1). Utilizing this concept, problems, with software or processes, can be located and solved in a controlled environment.

In other words, we can get any "bugs" out before they can impact our customers.



Meatier Mouse Menus

(Not a cookbook for pleasing your cat!)

• Nan Nail

While you're in the mood to customize, how about beefing up the shortcut menu that appears when you right-click your mouse. (How many of you KNEW there was a shortcut menu available through your mouse?) Once I found it, it turned out to be a very useful tool. It can be cus-

tomized the same as any other toolbar AND you'll have commands available literally at your fingertips. Here is the procedure:

1. Click "Tools" in the Menu Bar.
2. Click "Customize."
3. Click the "Toolbars" tab, scroll down the list and click on "Shortcut Menu." The Shortcut Menus toolbar appears.
4. Click the "Text" item on the Shortcut Toolbar. The Text shortcut menu appears.
5. To REMOVE an item, simply left click on it, hold the mouse button down and drag the item off the menu.
6. To ADD an item, in the Customize dialog box, click the "Commands" tab. Under "Categories" select "Edit," under "Commands" find the item and drag it into place in the Shortcut Menu.
7. Click "Close."

Employee Resource Committee

• Fred Cobb

ERC is the committee geared to provide assistance to DLI employees and the community. We would like to welcome our newest members Laurel Vielle with JSD, Kim Warner with CSD and Renee Wuertley with UID.

ERC contributed \$300 to help with the materials necessary for the Darelus Home Reroofing Project. Special thanks to Paul Otto, Pierre Lesueur and Mark Bowlds for their selfless donation of skill and time with this project. Also, ERC contributed \$100 to the Jonathan Hardwick Memorial after his untimely passing.

We have hosted three Brown Bag Lunches and featured travel and history videos as presentation, giving out first aid kits as door prizes. ERC held its bi-annual Adopt-a-Highway Cleanup in June and September. Rene Wuertley won the Golden Glove award in June for finding the most unusual item, a Boys 2 Men Christmas CD.

Upcoming Events – We will be conducting a Pumpkin Carving Contest in October with prizes for the most original and scary designs. Ooo! November will see our annual Turkey Raffle, Silent Auction and 50/50 Raffle. And thanks to everyone for helping ERC make a difference!



High Fives

"I just wanted to take a moment to thank your staff (Hearings Bureau) for all their help in resolving old appeals on the BeAR System prior to conversion of data to MISTICS. I couldn't have completed this task on time without their help. Most importantly, they always did it with a smile despite my constant interruption of their daily work!"

- Nan Nail, UI Division

"The Missoula counselors, Will Stuebsten, Erna, and Same have been absolutely wonderful in their support and encouragement. I feel like they really cared whether I did well and was happy in school. I feel a lot of my success is due to the fact I knew they were there behind me..."

- Christine Gresham
TRA Program participant

Congratulations to Elizabeth Anderson and Tom Hahn of the Livingston and Billings Job Service Workforce Centers for their achievement of the IAPES professional designation of Employment and Training Systems Specialist.

In Your Corner With Safety



Earthquakes Rock ... And when they do Know the Drill!

The forces that create Montana's beauty are the same forces that can rock your world. Earthquakes are caused by movement within the earth's crust. They are mystifying events and are as unpredictable as they are powerful not even seismologists fully understand the forces that set them in motion. Montana is the fourth most seismically active state in the U. S. Records show Montana has experienced significant earthquakes (magnitude 6.0 or larger) in 1897, 1909, 1925, 1935, 1947, 1959, 1964 and 1975. These quakes have damaged & destroyed buildings, disrupted our infrastructure, caused numerous injuries, and claimed 32 lives. Although we can't prevent or predict them, we can prepare for them. October is Earthquake Preparedness Month!

Know the Drill – Drop, Cover and Hold

Remain calm, DROP down to the ground. Take COVER under a sturdy desk, table, or other piece of furniture. If not possible, take COVER against an interior wall. It is important to COVER your head and neck with your arms. Avoid danger spots: windows, hanging objects, mirrors, tall objects, exterior walls and heavy items on wheels. If you take cover under a sturdy piece of furniture, HOLD onto it and be prepared to move with it. HOLD the position until the ground stops shaking and it is safe to evacuate the building. Expect Aftershocks!! If you are outdoors, remain calm. Try to avoid buildings, unstable structures, overhead power lines, and other obvious dangers. Although scary, this is a safe place to be!

Reduce your Risk – Be prepared

Earthquakes are the most unpredictable of all disasters. When the earth shakes, you may be left without every-day conveniences: electricity, water, food and medical attention. The rule of thumb is to include what you need to survive for at least 72 hours. Keep these items available at all times so you are **prepared to survive**: Flashlight, radio, extra batteries, first aid kit, water, prescription medication, food (non-perishable & easy to prepare) disposable dishes and silverware, bedding, toiletries, towels, cash, water purifiers, cookware, matches or lighter, can opener, knife, ax, shovel hammer & bucket, clothing, shoes, blankets, personal records, pet supplies, garbage bags and soap & disinfectant.

By far, earthquakes are the greatest single-event natural hazard Montana faces.

Torske's Talents Extend Beyond UI Work to Music

• Nan Nail

Karen Torske began her career with the Department of Labor, Unemployment Insurance Division, in 1981 when she went to work after a hiatus to be wife to husband Bert and mother to Sharon and Kevin. When she isn't processing payments for Benefits Payment Control, she likes to fill her time sewing, knitting and crocheting. She also enjoys cooking and is always perusing her many cookbooks for new recipes to try.

Her first love, however, has always been music. She plays the piano, having started lessons when she was 10 but she admits she doesn't do it much anymore. That hasn't dampened her enthusiasm for music, however. Half the DJs in the country would kill to have her knowledge of recording artists and musicians. This writer is hard pressed to remember the title of a song, where Karen, on the other hand, could tell you most of the back-up musicians on the recording and what other artists they have worked with.

Karen likes all kinds of music and tries not to limit her tastes. She can talk knowledgeably about anything from Ledbelly to Dolly Parton but her favorite style is the folk-rock style made famous by Bob Dylan and Neil Young. "I love to listen to somebody with a message," stated Karen. "It goes right up through today's music. Bruce Springsteen does the same thing. When 'Jakob Dylan (Bob's son) and the Wallflowers' received their Grammy for the album 'Bringing Down the Horse,' Jakob asked Springsteen to perform one of their songs on stage with them." On the ladies' side she claims Emmy Lou Harris and Allison Kraus as her preferences.

She admits she doesn't care for modern rock music. "I don't listen to it. When I hear it advertised, they sound like they're going to moan and groan and cry. There is little originality in a lot of the modern music. First of all, you can't understand what they're saying." Even so, Karen still is willing to give a listen to any type of music. She believes there are a lot of good modern musicians in the business but they still have to survive the test of time.

If you find yourself needing to know anything about recording artists and their music, stop by the Walt Sullivan Building and have a chat with Karen Torske. It's an enlightening experience.



Stating the Obvious team members included: back row, left to right, Mark Lanthorn, Suzanne Payton, and Diane Eby, team captain. Front row, left to right, Judie Rowe, and Ann Boland. Other members included Amy Sprouse, Ray Eby and Mike Buckley.

DLI Teams Win Top Awards

The DLI Move to Improve Teams took top honors at the state ceremony. The team, **Stating the Obvious**, won the top achiever award for the most points. The team was just one point shy of the maximum points.

The team of Ben Harris, Gary Stout, Jody Pace, Debbie Olson, Shirley Rush, Teresa O'Brien, Kathy Olgivie, and Melissa Todd won the state award for the best team name. With a name of **Ben and Gary's Chunky Monkeys**, and an earned reputation of being the most fun, most creative, most cordial, most congenial, most connected, most cooperative of all, how could they lose?

Congratulation teams!

Personnel Changes

April – September

TERMINATED

Jerry Andersen, ERD - Safety Bureau
 Darcy Azure, Havre JS
 Sandra Bechard, Great Falls JS
 Paul Blystone, Great Falls JS
 Brad Bowers, CSD - Fiscal Support Bureau
 Gloria Bryant, Kalispell JS (Retired)
 Donna Caban, CSD - Fiscal Support
 Tom Coonradt, UI Blgs Phone Center
 Carol Davidson, Helena JS
 Michaelene Dennis, ERD - WC Regulation
 Twila Elenbaas, Helena JS
 David Fenchak, Anaconda JS
 Jennifer Finnegan, CSD - Fiscal Support
 Bonnie Fisher, CSD - Fiscal Support (Retired)
 Stan Gerke, CSD - Hearings Bureau
 Susan Green, Missoula JS
 Janiece Hamilton, Kalispell JS
 Kristen Hanson, UI Billings Phone Center
 John Hawe, UI P&E Bureau (Retired)
 Ray Henken, CSD - Info. Services Bureau
 Amber Kaufman, UI Benefits
 Karen Kueffler, UI Benefits
 Tom Leonard, JS - Helena Central Office
 Libbi Lovshin, CSD - Fiscal Support Bureau
 Cindy Lund, Sidney JS
 Ken McElroy, Office of Personnel & Training
 Angus McPherson, ERD - Safety Bureau
 Charlene Macioroski, Butte JS
 Dorinna Manners, Kalispell JS
 Marlene Mills, Great Falls JS
 Harold Nanto, Billings JS (Retired)
 Stacey Nevin, Livingston JS
 Sandi Nitzel, Billings JS
 Linda Payton, Missoula JS
 Gary Pfister, Missoula JS
 Kerry Roccia, CSD - Hearings Bureau
 Leslie Sanderson, Libby JS
 Barbara Sawitzke, ERD - WC Claims Assist.
 William Shumway, Miles City JS
 Lori Smith, Great Falls JS
 Pam Strong, UI Helena Phone Center
 Mike Stroop, UI P&E Bureau
 Yvonne Sutlif, CSD - Fiscal Support Bureau
 Elaine Taylor, CSD - Fiscal Support Bureau
 John Terreo, Missoula JS
 Jo Thompson, UI Benefits
 Melisse Travis, ERD - WC Claims Assistance

Dee Ann Turck, Havre JS
 Gilbert Walker, Billings JS
 Vance Weckworth, Great Falls JS
 Debra Wilson, Great Falls JS
 Kenneth Wright, Libby JS

NEW HIRES

Sandra Bechard, Great Falls JS
 Brian Bird, Helena JS
 Darla Boone, UI Phone/Blgs
 Rodney Boyer, Helena JS
 Candance Burrington, Havre JS
 Carl Crouse, ERD - Safety Bureau
 Mavis Filler, Havre JS
 Kathleen Frank, Missoula JS
 Susan Green, Missoula JS
 Mike Hall, Butte JS
 John Harper, Billings JS
 Jeffrey Harrison, CSD - Budget- Fiscal Support
 Shaunda Hildebrand, CSD - Budget, Fiscal Sup.
 Sarah Hogan, Libby JS
 Loraine Hovland, ERD - WC Regulation
 Mora McCarthy, Kalispell JS
 Heidi Mann, Hamilton JS
 George Martinez, Missoula JS
 Jerry Metcalf, ERD - Safety Bureau
 Darcee Moe, Office of Legal Services
 Leland Mullens Jr., Miles City JS
 Janet Nick, CSD - Fiscal Support Bureau
 Lorean Oliver, Missoula JS
 Theresa Peterson, ERD Admin
 Brent Rabe, Office of Personnel & Training
 Billy Rainey, ERD - WC Claims Assistance
 Melissa Schmolke, Commissioner's Office
 Tina Seely, Kalispell JS
 Traci Sommerville, Great Falls JS
 John Terreo, Missoula JS
 Kathryn Wahl, Great Falls JS
 Jim Wheat, JS Admin
 Robin Whitesell, Great Falls JS

TRANSFERS

Fred Cobb, CSD FSB To UI Phone Ctr/Hlna
 Steve Duthie, Comm. Office To CSD TSB
 Nancy Elliott, Helena JS To JS Admin - JMG
 Shane Maharg, JS R&A To ERD Admin
 Charles Miller, Bozeman JS To WC Regulation

Presidential Declaration Activates DUA

• Jean Branscum

The Customer Service Representatives in the Helena Telephone Claims Center have quickly gotten up to speed on a program rarely used in Montana, Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA). In fact, no staff person remembers ever having used the program before its activation with the recent Presidential Wildfire Disaster Declaration.

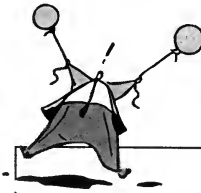
For now, however, it is their daily duty to know the requirements of this disaster program that provides temporary income payments to individuals unable to work or who lost work due to the wildfires or closure of public lands. According to UI reports, as of September 15, 2000, approximately 620 individuals had filed claims for DUA and over 1,200 workers had filed a regular UI claim after losing their job due to the wildfires. Individuals have until November 3, 2000, to file a DUA claim.

Workers' Compensation Court

• Mickey Lindgren

The Judge recently amended five of the Court's procedural rules (Petition for Trial, Service and Computation of Time, Joining Third Parties, Subpoena, and Appeals to the Workers' Compensation Court Under Title 39, Chapters 71 and 72, MCA) and adopted new rules concerning third-party practice, adjudication of interim benefit claims under 39-71-610, MCA, default, reference to Montana Rules of Civil Procedure, and joinder and service of alleged uninsured employers. The rules can be downloaded off the Court's Internet site or a hard copy obtained from the Court.

As of July 1st the Court has been in existence 25 years. We celebrated the occasion with a catered baron of beef lunch on Saturday, August 26th, at the Lewis & Clark County Fairgrounds.



High Fives

"I just wanted to say thank you (Byron Erickson) for broadening my interview skills, before the interview with you not only did I not know what to expect, but I was afraid to answer badly. Now I feel I could go to any other interview and get accepted."

-Tom, Hamilton High student

"I wanted to both congratulate and thank you (Lynn Long) for your successful effort to develop the Work First Office. It is an excellent model for all of Montana and has the feel of the future. Most importantly, it is a positive change for our clients and will help families overcome poverty."

-Hank Hudson, DPPHS Administrator

"I have reviewed the (DLI) Employee Policy and the Safety Competencies and I am impressed with them, as they seem to promote a system of safety accountability."

-Herb Byers, Senior Loss Control Consultant, State Fund



Long Named Outstanding Manager

Lynn Long, Manager of the Helena Job Service Workforce Center was honored as the Outstanding Local Job Service Center Manager. In her nomination, Long was described as a visionary – someone who is willing to take risks, to change, and who has been able to create an environment that supports innovation and continual improvement.

Long is known for having a high capability to translate cutting edge philosophy and resources to practical application in the workforce arena. Her aggressive leadership in workforce development and Workforce Investment Act implementation includes creation and development of Montana's state job bank system. Long has also been deeply involved in training activities for front line staff and management in helping internal customers, external customers and partners prepare for the Workforce Investment Act. She has assisted and mentored other staff and managers,

and is an effective motivator with high credibility with her staff and the Helena local JSEC.

Long has been a member of the International Association of Personnel in Employment Security (IAPES), the professional organization for individuals involved in workforce development, for the past 17 years. She is a past President of the organization, and has received an award at the international level, as well as having been a recipient of awards at the Montana Chapter level.

State Agencies' Surplus is the Schools' Treasure

• Jean Branscum

The Office of Public Instruction (OPI) announced that state government agencies transferred 782 computers, 14 printers and servers during the 1999-2000 school year to 55 public school systems across the state as part of the Surplus Computers to Schools Project. State Superintendent, Nancy Keenan, extended her appreciation to the efforts made by state agency staffs to make these computers available to schools. The program has provided benefits to classroom teachers and students across Montana.

The program was the result of HB 584, sponsored by Representative Carol Juneau, which authorized state agencies to donate surplus property to school districts for classroom use. The program is coordinated by OPI, and computers are made available to schools on a first come, first serve basis.

The Department of Labor and Industry was one of ten state government agencies who participated in the Surplus Computers to Schools Project this past year. Other agencies included Administration; Commerce; Corrections; Environmental Quality; Fish, Wildlife and Parks; Public Health and Human Services; State Auditor; Transportation; and the Office of Public Instruction.



Check Out Our New Digs

• Tina Hash

If you've wandered into the Old Board of Health Building on Lockey Street looking for the Research and Analysis Bureau folks, you're going to see unfamiliar faces.

Bob Rafferty and company have moved. The Research and Analysis Bureau is now located in the Old Shodair Hospital at 840 Helena Ave. Rafferty said it's been a goal of his to have all the staff in the same building. The Research and Analysis Bureau chief said, "It's great to have us all under one roof again and have some room to move around in."

The Bureau hosted an open house Aug. 28, 2000. The staff provided refreshments and held drawings for door prizes. If you haven't had an opportunity to see the new office space, please stop by and someone will give you a tour.

The *Montana Department of Labor and Industry's News* is published quarterly for the department's employees.

EDITOR: Jean Branscum

ASSISTANT EDITOR: Diane West

PHOTOGRAPHER: Steve Duthie

VOLUNTEER STAFF:

Laurel Vielle & Tina Hash, Job Service Division

Nan Nail, Unemployment Insurance Division

Mickey Lindgren & Clara Wilson, Workers' Compensation Court

Carol Larkin, Centralized Services Division

Wade Wilkison & Marla Yager, Employment Relations Division

Contact Jean at 444-1520 or Diane at 444-6845, if you have comments on this issue. We will accept your stories and photos at anytime. Your input is valued, and we hope to hear from you soon!

LaVonne Gilliam Goes the Extra Mile

• Nan Nail

LaVonne Gilliam is an Employment Counselor in the Billings Job Service. Since May 2000 she has been working with a client, a widow who has been trying to find employment as a bookkeeper. Her client has been in the Job Service program since March 1999. The client has good job skills, is a delightful person and has been willing to take any kind of employment just to keep food on the table. She has applied with 75 employers and been to 10 interviews, with no success. The problem is that LaVonne's client is missing nearly all her front teeth. "I never saw anyone working harder to find a job," states LaVonne. "It just wasn't enough."

As LaVonne tells it, "I was at the end of my rope. We tried all the nonprofit programs but no one could help. In spite of everything, (she) is not a bitter person. As a last desperate attempt I wrote a

letter to the Billings Gazette hoping someone could help." The letter was published Sunday, July 16th.

LaVonne's efforts were fruitful. When she returned to work the fol-

lowing Monday, there were four messages on her phone. Since then she has received over 20 re-

sponses. Four people were willing to pay the entire cost, even though a bottom line has yet to be established. In the mail LaVonne received a check for \$2,000 from a woman in Wyoming, another \$50 check and one for \$10 from someone who said it was all they could afford but wanted to help. There were also offers from dentists to perform the work. "I couldn't believe the response," LaVonne stated.

Due to LaVonne's caring about the people she represents, the story will have a happy ending. Her client's first dental appointment is August 1st. At this time, it is unknown how long the process

Due to LaVonne's efforts, this job seeker will be able to return to the labor force and become a self-sufficient member of the community.

will take but soon this physical problem will no longer be a roadblock to her client get-

ting the kind of job she is qualified for LaVonne has said she will keep us posted on how things are going for her client.

LaVonne Gilliam went the extra mile to help this client. Her efforts will result in a job seeker being able to return to the labor force and to be a self-sufficient member of the community. Hats off to LaVonne and to the generous people who responded to her call for help.



High Fives

"A personal note of thanks for your (Jean Branscum) untiring efforts to promote safety in the department. I believe your dedication and persistence in keeping the management team and all employees of DLI focused on safety issues is a model of how we make real progress in implementing a meaningful safety program."

- Jerry Keck, ERD Administrator

"Normally I wouldn't respond to an email that didn't ask for a respond, but I just had to email you (Cathy Shenkle) back to thank you for your wonderful help. . . . Sometimes it is so difficult to find anyone to help you and when you find an organization willing to help, it makes your day a little easier!"

- Jennifer Reynolds

"While all offices have been helpful, we would like to give a special thank you to Hamilton, Missoula, Libby and T. Falls — cooperation and communication with them has been great and has gotten us all through this. . . I also cannot resist telling you how very proud we are to have staff like we do in Polson and Kalispell. Fire duty, remodeling, new file server and accompanying computer glitches, trying to hire new personnel, discretionary grant and TAA mania, new welfare special grant, layoffs in Lake County, as well as lots of normal stuff like job orders. . . They have all jumped in and pulled together, supported each other and are getting the job done. This is why we love what we do — we get to work with these guys every day!"

- Mike, Al and Pat, Job Service Workforce Centers